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SOCIAL PROBLEMS

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO

THE CONFERENCE OF COMBINED CITY CHARITIES
OF TORONTO

May 20th, 1889

BY GOLDWIN SMITH

President of the Conference.

TORONTO :

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON
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SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

OUR formal report, ladies and gentlemen, of the Conference of Associated City Charities, is necessarily succinct and dry, dealing with nothing about which there can be any difference of opinion. I hope, as your President, I shall not be doing what is unacceptable at the close of our session if, in a less formal way, I recall to your minds some of the questions arising out of our work or connected with it, which have engaged your attention in the course of our meetings.

NECESSITY OF A PUBLIC RELIEF OFFICER.

In the department of charity, as in all other departments of municipal life and administration, questions are raised by the marvellous growth of Toronto. What sufficed for a population of twenty, or even of fifty, thousand will not suffice for a population of one hundred and eighty thousand, with a prospect of further increase. These cities of the New World have traversed in half a century the distance in the race of progress which it has taken the cities of the Old World ten centuries to traverse ; young in years they are old in magnitude, and the liabilities and cares of maturity have already fully come upon them. When I first settled in Toronto, a little more than twenty years ago, cows wandered in the streets of my quarter, where land is now selling at a high price per foot. The need of a more regular and skilled administration is felt in the department of

health and in that of engineering : the time can hardly be far distant when it will be felt in regard to the relief of destitution, of which a certain portion unhappily has its seat even amidst the pleasant and stately homes of the fairest, proudest and most prosperous city. We must all sympathize with the unwillingness to introduce a poor law, though it is a great mistake to suppose that public charity regularly and justly administered demoralizes or degrades more than private charity, which, through ignorance and want of time for the examination of cases, must often be dispensed with a lavish and capricious hand. We must all prize voluntary effort, which is twice blessed, blessing the giver of the relief as well as the receiver. On voluntary effort, in the main, we may still rely. That Toronto receives a full measure of it from workers of both sexes, who give not only money, but what is more precious and meritorious, their time and energy to the cause, must be well known to any one who occupies this chair. Notably to a body of ladies whose charitable feet are always on the path which leads to the house of suffering, and who carry with them the balm of comfort and good counsel as well as bread, the city owes a large meed of gratitude. To voluntary effort, and especially to that of the churches, we must look for the relief of the indigence which shrinks from sight and would never ask for public relief, yet is often accompanied by the keenest suffering. But though you may rely mainly on these agencies, you cannot, in such a city as this, rely entirely upon them. Responsibility in the last resort must rest somewhere, and it can scarcely be thrown even on the most devoted volunteers. Volunteers cannot give all their time, be always ready at a moment's notice, or be always in the city. Cases of emergency may occur, particularly in the depth of winter, and if no one is responsible for their relief the community may one day be awakened to the necessity of a change by something that would shock its humanity. The treatment of tramps and vagrants is

in some measure a matter of police, and police authority is necessary to maintain the proper rules and discipline in a casual ward. Cases of wayfarers in need of passes to help them to their destination often occur, and the Mayor of such a city of Toronto has not leisure to attend to them ; indeed the Mayor already finds it necessary to have special assistance in this part of his work, and it may be said that the principle of a regular relief officer has been adopted. There are also cases with which volunteers or private associations, from want of authority, are unable to deal. What is to be done, for example, where chronic destitution is the consequence of mental disease or infirmity, and where a private individual or charity can have no right to interfere ? Besides, a centre of guidance, information and observation is needed, and this nothing but a public office can supply.

One use of a centre of information would be the prevention of imposture, against which, in the absence of the means which such a record office affords of ascertaining the identity and verifying the stories of applicants, it is very hard, at least for those whose hearts are not fenced with the steel of experience, to guard. Several times have I been saved from imposition through information obtained from the Secretary of this Conference, Mr. Pell, who in this and other respects has really discharged in no small measure the functions of a relieving officer for many years past, but who has now reached the evening of a life dedicated to charitable work and to the study of the questions connected with it. It would perhaps be out of place to go into any personal details, and their publication might possibly bar a return to the right path. Otherwise I could narrate two or three remarkable cases of successful imposture which have come under my own notice. In each case an amount of ingenuity, tact, presence of mind and persuasiveness must have been exhibited which would have gone far towards making the man's fortune in an honest walk of

life. Someone should give us a history of impostors, from Perkin Warbeck downwards. It is wonderful, and the instances to which I have referred as falling under my own notice were among the proofs of it, how in these democratic communities of ours we are caught by the name of a lord.

IMMIGRATION.

Of the destitution and suffering with which the charities have had to deal in past years not a little has arisen from unsuitable immigration. The subject of emigration seems to have entered on a new phase in regard to this whole continent. The people of the United States, whose boast it has hitherto been that they opened a home to all who needed one, have become alarmed at the influx, both on economical and political grounds, and have begun to think of closing the door. So far as Canada is concerned, most of us, I believe, would say that there is nothing to fear so long as emigration is left to itself. A man is not likely of his own accord to leave his native country and pay his passage across the Atlantic without good reason for believing that he will find employment on the other side. It is when emigration is subsidized by Government or solicited by steamship agents that the danger of mistakes and suffering begins. No assistance, I understand, is now being given to immigration, either by the Dominion Government or by the Government of this Province, though the Provincial Government helps the immigrants on their arrival to find work. The result is, I learn at headquarters, a marked improvement in the description of immigrants, hardly any of whom of late have been cast upon charity on their arrival. The demands upon the St. George's Society and other national societies of late have also been somewhat lighter. An alarm is still sometimes raised about the action of boards of poor law guardians in England, who are suspected of harbouring designs of dumping their pauperism on Canada ; but no facts of that sort have

recently come before us, and by this time the people in the Old Country must be pretty well disabused of their not unnatural belief that population of whatever kind cannot fail to be welcome to a colony. The Conference addressed some time ago a word of caution through the department at Ottawa to the steamship companies. The managers of those companies seemed to think that our fears were unfounded and injurious ; but if they were, emigrants whose necessities we were called upon to relieve must have told us unaccountable falsehoods. Some distinction must be made in relation to this as to other questions between the different sections of our now widely extended and diversified Dominion. The case of the North-West, which needs above all things population, is not the same as that of Eastern Canada, where nearly all the good land has been taken up and the supply of mechanics is already large. For farm labourers, however, the demand in Ontario is still active, and emigrants of that class, if they are healthy, temperate and saving, seem pretty sure to do well. The question whether there is a demand for mechanics is one to which it is not easy to get a satisfactory answer. Those who are in possession of the labour market naturally desire to deter an influx of new comers, which might have a tendency to reduce wages ; they desire, as perhaps they would say, protection for labour as well as for the manufacturer ; and their interest can hardly fail to colour their perception of the facts. So far as I can learn, mechanics outside the building trade have still not much difficulty in finding work. The most important industry at Toronto of late has been the building trade. Should the growth of our city find a limit the employment of a good many mechanics would cease. That the growth of our city may find a limit seems possible when we consider that its apparent source is not so much the development of commerce on the spot as the passion for city life which seems to have taken possession of all the population of this continent and in some measure

of that of Europe also, and which has brought here a rush of emigrants from the smaller towns, while some of the smaller towns are threatened with depopulation and decay.

For good domestics who have had some training, and mean to be really helpful and obliging, there is still plenty of room, if we may trust the testimony of ladies who are keeping house and whose wails arise on all sides. The main root of the trouble probably is the democratic idea, which at present is in a crude and unsettled state. There is a fancy that service is degrading to the free citizeness, as though any employment under others, whether in a Government office, a factory, a bank or any other establishment were not service as well as employment in a household. Is not even a merchant practically in the service of his customers, and does he not sometimes find that service pretty hard? So it is, however, that employment in a factory, with harder work and far less comfort—anything, in short, which bears the name of independence—is preferred by the democratic girl to employment in a household. She feels that the day's work done she is entirely her own mistress. Perhaps the source of the trouble is not altogether on one side. On the side of the employer there may be sometimes want of judgment and not uncommonly want of experience. We talk of the old English household. The old English household, owing to the unsettled and restless habits of society in these days, is fast becoming a thing of the past. But in it the relation between master and servant was not merely commercial, and it was carefully cultivated on the side of the employer. The servants were made to feel themselves members of the family, and were assured that faithful service would be repaid with gratitude, that they would not be neglected in their old age or forgotten in the will. We can hardly expect that particular state of things to return. English girls have been imported into Canada, but it seems with indifferent success. They soon catch the prevailing ideas. Indeed, they are apt to

bring with them the notion that they are coming to a paradise of high pay and little work, and to conduct themselves accordingly. However, for good, or even tolerable, domestics my lady friends tell me that there is plenty of room. The class of emigrants for which there is certainly no room is what may be called the genteel class, those who seek clerkships, situations in Government offices, teacherships, or any employment of the less manual and more intellectual sort. For these the market is almost as glutted here as it is in England. English emigrants of this kind cannot possibly come to a worse place than Canada. They will find not only that the market is full, but that they are regarded with a certain degree of prejudice as interlopers. It might be thought that such cases did not come within the purview of the City Charities, but unfortunately they do. If a man, however educated and of whatever social grade, comes without resources to a country where there is no use for him, there is nothing to save him from destitution.

Child emigration, such as is carried on by Miss Rye and Dr. Barnardo, is a subject about which there is some difference of opinion, though there can be none as to the benevolence of those who devote themselves to the work, or as to the advantage to the Mother Country of being provided with homes for children who would otherwise grow up neglected or be trained to evil. The opinion of those most competent to decide seems to be that, of the boys at any rate, the vast majority do well. It is not to be expected that in all cases the child should, even when placed under the kindest influences in after-life, entirely work off the moral taint contracted in a bad home.

TREATMENT OF TRAMPS.

We have to thank the management of the House of Industry, and at the same time the City Council, which has liberally and wisely furnished the means, for an immense improvement in the arrangements of the Casual Ward. Cleanliness, decency

and sufficient comfort now reign where they did not reign before. The decent though destitute wayfarer in need of a night's shelter is no longer disgusted and degraded by the treatment which he receives. While we discourage indolent mendicancy and imposture, let us never forget that there is in the world plenty of genuine misfortune and of destitution to which unmixed pity is due. The management also does its best to apply the Labour Test. But I find myself not unsupported in the belief that this department would be better separated from the almshouse and placed under the police. The extent of the city, too, is now such that it may soon be necessary to have two casual wards instead of one.

THE PRISON QUESTION.

Between destitution and crime the connection is close; each is in some measure productive of the other. The special object of one of the charities of our city is to receive the discharged prisoner at the prison gate and save him from the want which would drive him back into crime. The city gaol is being enlarged to meet the requirements of a population which by growth or annexation has been trebled, or nearly so, within twenty years, though happily there has not been a proportionate increase of crime. It is to be hoped that in the enlarged building full facilities for separation and classification will be afforded, and that contaminating intercourse will cease. The excellent Governor of our City Gaol has been doing all that was in his power to separate the classes of prisoners and prevent contamination, but the means have been wanting to him. It is said, and apparently with reason, that for minor offences the term of imprisonment cannot be too short. Long terms must break up the prisoner's industry, deprive wives and children of support, perhaps throw them on charity; and even in the absence of bad companionship can hardly be morally improving. In the opinion of those who are well qualified to judge, a few

days of solitary confinement on bread and water would be a penalty in minor cases sufficiently severe and deterrent. In the case of graver offences and long terms of imprisonment, we find the best authorities agreeing in the conviction that if a prison is to be reformatory, or anything but a nursery of crime, labour is indispensable. Might it not be well that the labour, though compulsory, should be in some way recompensed? The convict is a man who has left the path of honest labour for that of crime, and the object must be to win him back to the path of honest labour. To make labour hateful to him, as the treadmill or anything of that kind does, is apparently to defeat the object. If he is idle, evil is sure to breed in his vacant mind. Long periods of solitary confinement are cruel and crushing. Prison missions are no doubt excellent things, if it were only that they show sympathy with the prisoner and assure him that though an offender, and necessarily condemned to pay the penalty of his offence, he is not cut off from humanity. But it is by action that character is formed; and mere impressions, upon which the man cannot act, however strong at the moment, can hardly be relied upon for the improvement of his character when he is restored to practical life. Efforts are being made at the City gaol to give the prisoners work, but there is difficulty in providing it. Outside work close to a city makes heavy demands on the prison staff for guards. There is also the fear of awakening popular jealousy of prison competition. This is most excited by indoor trades, the products of which come into the market, such as shoemaking, which I saw being carried on, and I understood with good results, in penitentiaries in the United States. I am told, however, that it would be excited even by setting the prisoners of the City gaol to work at the Don, and that the seat of a member for East Toronto who did not oppose such a measure would be in jeopardy. We must heartily sympathize with the feelings of the honest working-man who thinks that the trade by which he makes his bread and

the bread of his wife and children is in danger of being exposed to unjust competition. But we must ask him to remember, in the first place, that the prisoners, if they were not in gaol, would be competing with him in the labour market, so that there is no increase in the amount of competition ; and in the second place, that this is a question not merely of prison economy, but of moral right. A prisoner, by his offence, has forfeited for the time his civil privileges ; but he has not forfeited his moral rights ; no moral being can. If labour is indispensable to his moral health and reformation, to labour he still has a right, and to deprive him of it is to become responsible for his continuance in criminal courses. The opinion best worth hearing on all these questions would be that of experienced governors of our gaols, and it is a pity that it should not be heard. Perhaps the whole subject of penal imprisonment may some day come up for review. Society is apt to run on without reflecting in a groove in which it was perhaps at first set running by accident. A prison, I take it, was originally a place for safe-keeping, and hideous places for safe-keeping some of them were : in ancient Rome the prisoner was let down into the cell through a hole in the roof. Imprisonment as a punishment probably was an afterthought, and still more so was imprisonment as the means of reformation. The question may be some day raised whether the best reformatory is what the thieves expressively call "the stone jug." The idea of a prison camp for labour on public works has been suggested, and the plan, I am told, has been tried with success in one of the Southern States. A camp sounds more healthy than stone walls ; it suggests greater possibilities of discipline ; being at a greater distance from cities it could be more easily guarded, and it would hardly excite popular jealousy on the score of competition. However, as I have already said, we should like to hear from experienced governors of gaols.

There is such a thing, it is to be feared, as a hopelessly

criminal character. At a place which I sometimes visit in the United States they had a case apparently of this kind. He was a man, not only of considerable intellectual power but of literary tastes, and while he was running a career of the most fearful crime, murdering among other people his own wife and child, he was inventing a universal language. The shape of his head was remarkable, and seemed to indicate something monstrous. The frontal development was highly intellectual, but the rest of the head, which was enormously broad between the ears, seemed to bespeak the intensity of animal and brutal passions. The man spent a term in a penitentiary of high repute, but without any good result. He came out only to recommence his murderous career. He was hanged at last after two attempts had been made to save him, one on the usual plea of lunacy, the other on the plea that his execution would extinguish a light of learning and science. In such a case the only thing apparently to be done is to cage the wild beast and prevent him from tearing other people. But in ordinary cases it is probably as much circumstance as natural character that has made the criminal, so that reformation is possible, at all events in the early stages of his career. These tramps, about whom we are so much alarmed, and whose habits verge so closely on those of the criminal, may, after all, be men out of whom nomadism, the habit of primitive man, has not been thoroughly worked, and who, though disinclined to sedentary or settled labour, might, under discipline, make good soldiers perhaps, not only in an army of war, but in an army of industry.

We are sorry to hear that there are still some lunatics in the City gaol. This is unjust, not only to the lunatics themselves but to the other inmates, who, though they have been condemned to imprisonment, have not been condemned to the society of the insane. The arrangement, however, is only provisional, pending the enlargement of the accommodations for lunacy, which appears to be on the increase, though from what

cause is not clearly explained; probably from a complication of causes, including the enhanced strain and excitement of modern life. The practice of using the gaol as a poorhouse for broken-down labourers, committed to it on a nominal charge of vagrancy, we are happy to know is at an end. These men are the disabled veterans of industry, and as much entitled to relief without degradation as the veterans of war. It is strange, with all our democracy and enlightenment, how extraordinary a preference is still given by popular sentiment to service in war. Policemen and firemen often do things fully as heroic as were ever done by the soldier. Yet we do not think of crowning them with laurel.

THE ANTI-POVERTY MOVEMENT.

To vary the ordinary business of our meetings we had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from the Anti-Poverty Society of this city, the excellence of whose object cannot be questioned. It may be with doubtful feelings that a lawyer or a physician would receive a plan for putting an end at once to litigation or disease. But this association would receive with unmixed pleasure a plan that would terminate its functions by putting an end to poverty. Not that it is with poverty, properly speaking, that we are concerned; we are concerned with destitution, which arises from a multiplicity of causes, certainly beyond the reach of any economical reform, such as individual misfortune, infirmity, age, accident, idleness, improvidence, and vice. But we may admit that if there were no longer any poverty the need for charitable institutions would probably cease. Political economy has been called "the dismal science." It is not easy to see why the study of the laws which regulate the production and distribution of wealth should be more dismal than the study of any other set of natural laws. Nothing, it seems to me, can be more beautiful than the arrangements by which workers all over the world are brought into

co-operation with each other and the price of the smallest manufactured article, though it be but a single cent, is divided among all who in different parts of the world have contributed to its production. Nothing can be more beautiful than the machinery of credit, by which gold is economized and capital supplied for trade. Nothing can be more interesting than the investigation of the fiscal policies and other causes which increase or diminish the wealth of nations. With more justice, perhaps, might political economy be called "the science of false hopes." It continues at least in a strange way to be the field of Utopian speculation. In other departments of science people have given up looking for the philosopher's stone, the elixir vitæ, perpetual motion, and universal cures. But in political economy we have still men of great talent as well as ardent in their philanthropy, who believe that they have discovered universal cures for poverty. Some propose to stamp a number of pieces of paper with the names of gold or silver coins, and to persuade or force the community to accept them as coins, believing that they will thereby flood the world with wealth. They are not moved by the proof which repeated experience furnishes that the community cannot be persuaded or forced to take a shower of bad promissory notes for money, and that the only consequence of tampering with the currency is the fatal derangement of commerce and industry. Others propose to effect a magical change in the general condition by abolishing private ownership of land, and turning all the land over to an entity, which they call the State, and suppose it to be something apart from and above the members of the community, with a wisdom, a beneficence, and also apparently a purse of its own; as though the State were anything but the members of the community collectively or their representatives the politicians, whom reformers seldom describe as endowed with superior wisdom and beneficence. The benevolent extirpators of poverty, if they propose to transfer all ownership of land from the present

proprietors to the State, either directly or by the use of the taxing power, will have to begin by reducing the landowners as a class to the very condition which they propose to extirpate; or rather they will have to begin by fighting the farmers, who will certainly defend their farms, and the opening of the millennium will be an agrarian war, in which it seems by no means certain that the victory would remain with the philanthropist. The world began with common ownership of land of which in barbarous or half-barbarous countries vestiges still remain ; and the almost universal change to private ownership is the verdict of almost universal experience. What the community wants is that the land shall produce as much bread for us all as possible, and how can we expect the highest rate of production without the stimulus of private ownership ? Have not the land reformers in their crusade against landlordism been always telling us that the land could never yield its fruits in due measure while the tillers were mere tenants at will ? Systems of taxation may always be capable of improvement, and it is highly probable that in cities real property is the best and the fairest basis of taxation ; but how the world as a whole can be made much richer by merely shifting the burden of taxation from one shoulder to the other seems difficult to conceive. It appears to be assumed that in the social and economical sphere perfection is the law of nature, and that imperfection is the consequence of bad legislative arrangements which might at once be set right if labour reformers and poverty-destroyers could only get power into their hands. Unhappily everything which meets our eyes proclaims that not perfection but imperfection is the law, the law of the social as well as of the physical organism, of the body politic as well as of the individual body ; of man's dwelling-place and life ; of the solar system itself, which seems to be full of gaps and wrecks ; of the stellar system, if it be true that astronomy has witnessed the destruction of a star. The only optimism countenanced by

facts is that which, trusting the counsels of the universe, looks forward through all this imperfection to the attainment of perfection as a distant goal. If the gifts of fortune or the faculties by which wealth is produced and saved are not fairly distributed among men, neither are the gifts of physical strength and beauty, brain power, or the blessings of health, offspring, and long life. Reputation itself, which ought to be proportioned to deserts, how little is it often enjoyed in accordance with real worth ! Evils, often great evils, attend the institution of property. We have bloated fortunes, with all the dangers which they involve to society and morality, on one side ; on the other, we have often insufficient remuneration for labour not only in the case of the mechanic, but in the case of the merchant, who doing his best, fails to get custom, and of the professional man who, doing his best, fails to get employment. We have, besides, all the vices which attend the making and the spending of wealth, covetousness, avarice and fraud, the selfishness which the intense pursuit of gain engenders, the habit of gambling speculation produced by the passion, so rife in these commercial communities, for becoming suddenly rich. But the desire of property is our only known motive power, and if property ceased to be secure, production, at least any production but that necessary to allay the immediate cravings of hunger, would cease ; there would be an end of the accumulation of wealth, and at the same time of human progress. Socialists have pointed to military honour as an instance of a motive power different from the desire of wealth ; but it has been well replied that military honour is not left to its spontaneous action but is sustained by a code of law exceptionally severe. I would not for a moment connect the philanthropists of the Anti-Poverty Society with certain Labour Reformers who make it their aim to set class against class, labour against capital, the toilers—to use their favourite phrase—against the spoilers, and to sow the seeds of industrial war. Once at least in history the theories of

these men and the passions to which they appeal have had full play. Under the ascendancy of the Jacobins the spoilers were plundered, guillotined or banished by thousands ; capital was either destroyed or driven into hiding-places, and the result, besides an avalanche of crimes and horrors, was the total wreck of commerce and industry, followed by a national famine in which it is computed, that more than a million of persons perished. It is possible, by violent measures, to lacerate the social and industrial frame ; it is not possible to transform it. That gradual improvement is going on we have every reason to feel assured. Conclusive statistics seem to show not only that there has of late been a great increase of the sum of wealth in commercial and industrial communities, but that there has been a gradual redistribution in favour of the workingman ; in other words, that a larger share of the increase has gone to wages than to profits, while, huge as some of the great fortunes are, the aggregate of small fortunes has increased in far larger proportion. Among the proofs are the returns of the savings banks in this country as well as in England. For this improvement we are chiefly indebted to the natural operation of economical laws. Legislation has done something and legislation may do more : nobody would wish to discourage legislative effort ; but the name of the Anti-Poverty Society promises, it is to be feared, more than can be performed. The suffering caused by the pressure of population on the means of subsistence in overcrowded countries is what no kings or laws can cure, any more than they can prevent the occurrence of the accidental distress with which it is mainly the business of the charities to deal.

On the other hand, let not those who have the larger share of fortune's goods forget that the inequality, however inevitable, is an imperfection in the social frame, not a perfection ; or at least a perfection only so far as it may be conducive to human progress and civilization. If nobody has comparative

wealth or leisure, not only literature, art, refinement of all kinds, and the various trades and employments which depend upon them, would cease to exist, but science and invention, so far as we can see, would come to a stand. Nay, the very ideal and the standard of living which are necessary to give birth to upward effort could hardly survive. But a man is not promoting progress or civilization who lives in idle luxury, and if to idle luxury he adds that ostentation of wealth which excites envy and bitterness in the hearts of the poor, he may consider himself a member of the most dangerous class. The dynamiter's best ally is the flaunting luxury of the millionaire. These are troublous times. The social and industrial world heaves with the action of subterranean fires, which have already burst into eruption on a terrible scale at Carthage and Paris, and on a smaller scale at many other places, some of them on this continent, as at Pittsburg and Chicago. In the imperfect and twilight state of popular education, social chimeras have power, especially when hunger and envy second the delusion. It is an age of general disintegration and perplexity. From the minds of a large number of workingmen, especially artisans, the old belief in the existing frame of society as an ordinance of Providence, to which man must submit, has departed. So has the old belief in the compensation of a future state of existence for those whose lot is hard, but who do their duty here. That the working class will no longer allow their claims to be put off to another world, but will claim their full share of enjoyment here, is a sentiment frequently expressed, which no doubt is a serious factor in the present social situation. Care for their own safety, then, as well as higher considerations, counsels the natural leaders of society to be at the post of duty. We have good reason to be grateful to our captains of industry for the services rendered by them, not only in the way of industrial and commercial organization, but of social leadership. It is lucky for us indeed that we are practically governed in part

by them, not wholly by the politicians. But in new communities like ours, where the atoms of society are very shifting, where there are no strong family or local ties, or even old commercial firms, men having made their pile, as the phrase is, are naturally tempted to go and enjoy it where it can be best enjoyed, perhaps in European cities where society is most brilliant and all the services are most perfect, without much consideration where or by what hands it was made. There is a continual rush of wealthy Americans to the pleasure cities of Europe, which must leave serious social gaps, besides taking away a great deal of wealth. Often these people are munificent in their gifts to charitable institutions, but gifts to charitable institutions will not make up for the absence of the natural leaders of society from the post of duty.

Of this, at all events, we may be pretty sure : in October, when the meetings of the Conference will commence, the saying that the poor we have always with us will not be much less true than it is now. The world is not likely to be re-made in the interval by a wave of any legislator's magic wand. Amidst all the noise and smoke of political, social, and economical war, Charity pursues her quiet course, appealing to the feelings that unite, not to the passions that divide us, and satisfied with the comparatively humble task of providing shelter for heads which must be sheltered, and food for mouths which must be fed.

MAY 2 1931

